



New England Convenience Store & Energy Marketers Association

April 11, 2022

Testimony of New England Convenience Store & Energy Marketers Association

Rhode Island General Assembly
House Environment and Natural Resources Committee

RE: HB 7545 – AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- SANITATION IN FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS -- SINGLE USE PLASTIC STRAWS

Chair Bennett, 1st Vice Chair Phillips, 2nd Vice Chair O'Brien, and Members of the Committee:

The New England Convenience Store & Energy Marketers Association (NECSEMA) represents convenience store and gasoline retailers, independent transportation fuel distributors, and the businesses which supply them. NECSEMA members own, operate, and supply the nearly 500 convenience stores that employ 7,000 people in Rhode Island.

NECSEMA appreciates the opportunity to provide comments in support of HB 7545 for the Committee's consideration. As proposed, HB 7545 exempts drive-through and take-out establishments from providing a plastic straw only upon request by the consumer.

NECSEMA supports HB 7545, as a practical and narrowly defined measure to return convenience to our customers and other businesses providing beverages to consumers on the go. In prior testimony on this subject, NECSEMA was concerned with the "upon request" provision and the inconveniences posed to the consumer. HB 7545 addresses these concerns eliminating the frustrating scenario where a customer either walks-out of or drives-off from the store only to realize they forgot to ask for a straw. Whereupon they either must return, wait in line again, or forgo consuming their beverage on the go.

We believe this proposal leaves the existing requirement intact on those businesses using the most straws. We urge you to support passage of HB 7545 and return convenience to our customers. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our position on this matter.

Respectfully,

Brian P. Moran
Director Government Affairs

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